

PL Project Update for Industry

August 2008

Progress of the plain language (PL) project for is summarized in 3 parts:

1. Implementation of the new PL *Bid* book
2. Gradual conversion of the *2006 Standard Specifications* and standard special provisions
3. 2010 edition of the standard specifications, standard special provisions, and standard plans

1. Implementation of the PL *Bid* book

The PL *Bid* book was implemented in July. The *Bid* book replaced the *Proposal and Contract* book. A copy of the contract form is included as an amendment to Section 3 of the *2006 Standard Specifications*.

2. Gradual conversion of the current specifications

Caltrans is gradually changing current specifications to plain language (PL). The amendments to the *2006 Standard Specifications* include the following:

SECTION 1 DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

(Issued 07-01-08)

Replace Section 1 with:

SECTION 1 GENERAL

1-1 GENERAL

1-1.01 GENERAL

Section 1 includes general rules of interpretation.

The Department is gradually standardizing the style and language of the specifications. The new style and language includes:

1. Use of:
 - 1.1. Imperative mood
 - 1.2. Introductory modifiers
 - 1.3. Conditional clauses
2. Elimination of:
 - 2.1. Language variations
 - 2.2. Definitions for industry-standard terms
 - 2.3. Redundant specifications
 - 2.4. Needless cross-references

The use of this new style does not change the meaning of a specification not yet using this style.

The specifications are written to the Bidder before award and the Contractor after. Before award, interpret sentences written in the imperative mood as starting with "The Bidder must" and interpret "you" as "the Bidder" and "your" as "the Bidder's." After award, interpret sentences written in the imperative mood as starting with "The Contractor must" and interpret "you" as "the Contractor" and "your" as "the Contractor's."

Unless an object or activity is specified to be less than the total, the quantity or amount is all of the object or activity.

All items in a list apply unless the items are specified as choices.

Headings are included for the purposes of organization and referencing. Inclusion of a heading with no related content, "Reserved," or "Not Used" does not indicate that no specification exists for that subject; applicable specifications may be covered in a general or referenced specification.

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3. 2010 Standards

The next edition of the standards is scheduled for released at the end of 2010. The organization of the *2010 Standard Specifications* will be similar to the *2006 Standard Specifications*. The *2010 Standard Specifications* and standard special provisions will be in PL and conform to the *Style Guide for the 2010 Specifications*. Amendments to the *2006 Standard Specifications* will be absorbed into the *2010 Standard Specifications*.

Sections 1through 9 of the *2010 Standard Specifications* will be updated. The final draft of these sections will be posted on the internet.

After 2010, the subsequent edition of the construction contract standards will have a new division organization. The same division numbers will be used for the *Standard Specifications*, project specific specifications, *Standard Drawings*, and bid item codes. It is anticipated that future editions of the construction contract standards will be published about every 4 years.